COLORADO
SPECIAL PRESS RELEASE

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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CROP PRODUCTION - JULY 2009

COLORADO HIGHLIGHTS

Winter wheat production in Colorado is now forecast at 88.8 million bushels according to the Colorado Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. This is up 10 percent from the June 1 forecast and 56 percent above last year's production. Growers expect to harvest 2.4 million acres this year, up 500,000 acres from 2008. The state's average yield is forecast at 37.0 bushels per acre, 7.0 bushels per acre above the previous year and 2.0 bushel per acre above the June forecast. Excellent growing conditions during June boosted yield potential in most growing areas. **Barley** production is initially forecast at 9.36 million bushels, up 8 percent from the 2008 crop. Acreage harvested is expected to total 78,000 acres, up from 72,000 harvested last year and yield is forecasted at 120.0 bushels per acre, unchanged from last year. **Fall potato** growers in the San Luis Valley planted 56,000 acres this year, down 2 percent from last year. Area for harvest is expected to total 55,800 acres which is 1,100 acres less than 2008. The first 2009 fall potato production forecast will be released November 10, 2009. **Summer potato** production is expected to reach 1.44 million cwt for 2009 down 5 percent from the 2008 crop. Growers expect to harvest 3,800 acres this year, down 7 percent from the previous year. Average yield is initially forecast at 380 cwt per acre, 10 cwt above last year's yield. Colorado's 2009 **peach** crop is initially forecast at 13,000 tons, down 1,000 tons from last year. Spring freeze damage was average depending on location and available freeze protection devices. Irrigation water supplies on the Western Slope have been adequate this year.

UNITED STATES HIGHLIGHTS

Winter wheat production is forecast at 1.52 billion bushels, up 2 percent from the June 1 forecast but down 18 percent from 2008. Based on July 1 conditions, the U.S. yield is forecast at 43.8 bushels per acre, down 0.1 bushel from last month and 3.4 bushels below last year. Expected grain area totals 34.8 million acres, down 12 percent from last year but unchanged from the *Acreage* report released on June 30, 2009. Harvest in the 18 major producing States was 40 percent complete by June 28. This was 4 percentage points ahead of last year but 6 points behind the 5-year average.

Other spring wheat production is forecast at 506 million bushels, 7 percent below 2008. The U.S. yield is forecast at 38.3 bushels per acre, up 2.2 bushels from last year. Area harvested for grain is expected to total 13.2 million acres, unchanged from the *Acreage* report released on June 30, 2009 but down 2 percent from last year.

Oats production is forecast at 91.3 million bushels, 3 percent above last year's record low 88.6 million bushels. If realized, this will be the third lowest production on record. Based on conditions as of July 1, the yield is forecast at 64.0 bushels per acre, up 0.5 bushel from 2008. Growers expect to harvest 1.43 million acres for grain or seed, up 2 percent from last year. If realized, this will be the second smallest harvested area on record.

Barley production for 2009 is forecast at 203 million bushels, down 15 percent from 2008. Based on conditions as of July 1, the average yield for the United States is forecast at 64.7 bushels per acre, up 1.1 bushels from a year ago. Area harvested for grain or seed, at 3.14 million acres, is down 17 percent from 2008. Record setting yields are expected in Arizona, Utah, and Wyoming, while a record tying yield is expected in Idaho.

The U.S. **peach** production forecast is 1.07 million tons, down 5 percent from both the 2008 and 2007 crop. Eleven of the 23 Freestone peach estimating States expect increases in production from last year, while nine States decreased their production from the previous season, and three States showed no change. Freestone production, at 631,040 tons, is down 11 percent from last season. The California Clingstone crop is forecast at 440,000 tons, unchanged from the June 1 forecast but 3 percent above the 2008 crop. This season's bloom was reported as good to very good in all growing areas. Freezing temperatures in early March resulted in slight frost damage in some areas. However, early March rainstorms gave way to good weather for pruning, spraying, and tree planting. By the end of April, the fruit was starting to differentiate in size. Harvest began on June 18, which was the same starting date as last year. The California Freestone crop is forecast at 350,000 tons, down 5 percent from the June 1 forecast and 19 percent below the 2008 crop. Freezing temperatures in early March, along with decreased bearing acres, has resulted in a lower production forecast. Harvest continued during June with Brittney Lane, Crimson Lady, Spring Flame, Earlirich, Sierra Snow, and Ivory Princess being the major varieties.

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Potato growers across the United States planted an estimated 1.06 million acres of potatoes in all four seasons of the 2009 crop year, up slightly from the previous year. Area for harvest, forecasted at 1.05 million acres, is also up slightly from 2008. **Fall potatoes** area planted to fall potatoes in 2009 is estimated at 932,900 acres, up slightly from the 2008 crop year. Harvested area is forecast at 922,700 acres, also up slightly from 2008. Idaho growers increased planted area 5 percent from last year but these are the lowest acres planted since 1986. As of July 5, crop conditions were rated 95 percent good to excellent. Washington producers planted 6 percent fewer acres than a year ago. Cool, wet conditions delayed planting throughout the State. Significant planting did not begin until early-April but high temperatures late in the month enabled progress to advance quickly. By late-May, virtually the entire crop was in the ground. Oregon growers increased planted area 2 percent from last year. The crop got off to a good start without any widespread delays to planting. In Colorado, planted area dropped 2 percent from the previous year as growers continued to voluntarily limit acreage for water conservation and supply management. Planting finished slightly ahead of schedule and the crop was rated in mostly good condition. Fall potato planted area remained unchanged from last year in California, Maine, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin. Potato growing areas in Maine received frequent and intense rain events during June after a cool, dry planting season. Northern areas of Aroostook County did not receive as much rain as southern locations and excellent crop conditions were reported. Further south, conditions ranged from fair to good, depending on moisture levels. Michigan's planted area increased 5 percent from 2008. Plants were in good to excellent condition, benefitting from above normal rainfall this season. Planted area also increased in Nebraska, Massachusetts, Montana, Nevada, and New Mexico. Growers in North Dakota planted 2 percent fewer acres than last year. Planting began later than normal and remained behind average throughout the planting season. As of June 28, crop condition was rated 63 percent good to excellent. Planted area also decreased from last year in New York and Minnesota.

Production of **summer potatoes** is forecast at 14.5 million cwt, up 6 percent from 2008. Harvested area is estimated at 42,500 acres, 5 percent below last year. Average yield is forecast at 341 cwt per acre, up 11 percent from 2008. Production is expected to be up in California, Delaware, Maryland, Missouri, and Virginia. The largest increase was noted in Missouri, where yields were expected to return to normal levels after last year's rainy weather which negatively impacted the crop. In Virginia, timely spring rains and hot temperatures during June allowed for good growth. Crop condition was rated as good to excellent. States forecasting a decrease in production are Colorado, Illinois, New Jersey, and Texas. Texas growers expected the largest decrease in summer potato production, due to the large decline in harvested area. Fewer acres were planted in 2009 due to drought conditions. In Colorado, the crop was progressing slightly behind schedule. Moderate temperatures and frequent afternoon thunderstorms have delayed crop development.